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THE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF SOVIET CHEMICAL LITERATURE

B. A. Pogodin  
Moscov

The Great October Socialist Revolution opened the way for the manifold development of the creative forces of our country.

One of the first activities to embark on this new road was Soviet chemical literature. As early as 1917, under conditions of civil war and economic disorder, the first specialized publishing house in the world for chemical literature was organized: the Scientific Chemico-technical Publishing House attached to the Scientific Technical Department of the Supreme Council of National Economy. This was the predecessor of the present Khimtekhnizdat (State Scientific Technical Publishing House for Chemical Literature). In its first years, despite tremendous organizational and technical difficulties, the Khimtekhnizdat was already able to begin issuing numerous original and translated books on chemistry and chemical technology, which satisfied to a considerable degree the greatly increased demand for chemical textbooks, reference works, and popular books. The principal editor of the Khimtekhnizdat, Prof M. A. Blokh (1880-1941), a scholar of broad erudition and great organizational abilities, managed to attract highly qualified authors and translators to this most important project. As a result, it was immediately put on a high scientific level in spite of isolated errors and faults.

In addition to the Khimtekhnizdat, chemical literature is being published also by such major Soviet publishing houses as the Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (monographs and journals), the Uchpedgiz (textbooks for secondary schools), and by many others.

Of course, statistics will show how many titles and copies of books and journals on chemistry have appeared in the 30 years of the Soviet regime. We can only say that the number is tremendous and far surpasses what was published in pre-

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Revolutionary Russia. However, let us quote here a few very pertinent figures. In 1895 the sixth edition of 7,500 copies of Fundamentals of Chemistry by D. I. Mendeleev was published; the next edition, the seventh, appeared in 1903. Thus, on an average, somewhat more than 1,000 copies of the Fundamentals were distributed annually. When the first volume of the ninth edition (5,000 copies) of this classic book was published in 1927, it sold out before the appearance of the second volume in 1928. Textbooks printed in considerably larger editions were distributed even faster. For example, B. N. Menshutkin's textbook of inorganic chemistry went through four editions from 1924 to 1933 (40,500 copies); B. V. Bekrasov's textbook appeared in seven editions from 1935 to 1945 (125,000 copies); and N. I. Glinka's textbook went through three editions from 1940 to 1946 (140,000 copies). Thus in 23 years the three most generally used textbooks of inorganic chemistry for higher schools were printed in a quantity of over 300,000 copies. V. N. Verkhnovskiy's well-established textbook of chemistry for secondary schools has likewise been distributed in many hundreds of thousands of copies. These figures graphically demonstrate both the tremendous scale of output of Soviet chemical literature and the immense demand for it.

No less eloquent are the data cited in the recently published valuable bibliographical guide Chemistry in the Publications of the Academy of Science of the USSR (No 1). Among the publications of the Academy of Sciences during the period from 1728 to 1930, 2,304 works on chemistry were published; of these, 1,376 appeared in the pre-Revolutionary period (189 years!), and 928 in the first 13 years of the Soviet regime.

A characteristic feature of educational chemical literature being published in our country is that works written by Soviet scholars considerably predominate over translations and reprints. It may be said without exaggeration that at the present time almost all fundamental chemical disciplines are represented by Soviet textbooks and manuals of high quality. This applies especially to inorganic or general chemistry. We have already mentioned the widely-distributed textbooks, written in the Soviet period, of B. N. Menshutkin, B. V. Bekrasov, and N. I. Glinka. It is also necessary to refer to the original textbooks of L. V. Pissarzhevskiy (the first attempt at a systematic exposition of inorganic chemistry on the basis of the electronic theory), V. Ya. Kurbatov, A. A. Yakovkin, the reprints of D. I. Mendeleev's Fundamentals of Chemistry (four editions), and the textbooks of I. A. Kaulkov and A. M. Reformatskiy. Along with these works of Soviet authors, translations of some of the best foreign books on inorganic chemistry, Kramm, Remy, Lowrey, have also been published.

The status of textbooks on analytical chemistry is less favorable. Here, for the time being, such translated works as the well-known books of Treadwell, Kertman, Kohlhor, and Hillebrand and reprints of B. N. Menshutkin's Analytical Chemistry (five editions) occupy a prominent place. However, there are also original textbooks on qualitative analysis (V. V. Byzov, V. I. Petrashev', and V. N. Alekseyev), on gravimetric analysis (N. A. Tananayev), and on volumetric analysis (N. A. Shilov). N. A. Tananayev's textbook on drop analysis should be particularly noted. In addition to the revised translation of the fundamental reference work of Lunge-Berl, several valuable original textbooks on technical analysis have appeared (P. P. Fedot'yev, D. N. Monastyrskiy, B. G. Karpov, and A. N. Dymov).

The educational literature on organic chemistry includes numerous original handbooks (A. S. Ginzberg, N. Ya. Dem'yanov, Yu. S. Zal'kind, B. N. Menshutkin, Ya. I. Mikheyenko, A. Ye. Favoriskiy, V. V. Shelinstsev, and P. P. Sharygin), along with reprints of B. N. Reformatskiy's textbook and translations of several foreign handbooks (Holleman, Conant, and Carrer).

Until quite recently the demand for textbooks on physical chemistry and chemical thermodynamics was satisfied primarily by literature in translation (Eggert, Alben, Taylor, Getman and Daniels, Partington, Lewis, and Randall). Now we have our own textbooks on physical chemistry (V. A. Klatyakovskiy, A. I.

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Brodskiy, and A. V. Rakovskiy, on thermochemistry (I. A. Kabiukov), and on other branches of physical chemistry. On physicochemical analysis and the theory of heterogeneous equilibrium there are at present very few original books (N. S. Kurnakov, I. A. Kabiukov, A. B. Modzkeyevskiy, and V. Ye. Grushvitsky) and translations (Firidlay and Tamman).

The history of chemistry does not yet occupy its proper place in the educational plans of our highest chemical schools. Therefore, although we have interesting, though not numerous, histories and monographs of chemical studies (B. N. Meshutkin, M. A. Blokh), we do not have at present a single work giving a systematic exposition of the course of development of chemical knowledge. This gap is partly filled by B. N. Meshutkin's excellent book Chemistry and the Paths of Its Development, for popular consumption. The creation of a work which would illuminate the historical development of chemistry from the point of view of materialistic dialectics and demonstrate the part played in it by the chemists of Russia and the USSR is an urgent problem of the day. We cannot be satisfied by translations or rebashes of works of foreign historians of chemistry, who stand on bourgeois-eclectic or nationalistic positions. The latter applies particularly to German works on the history of chemistry, of which one might say in the words of Peter the First: "The Germans have made a practice of filling their books with worthless tales only that they might appear great".

Soviet literature on chemical technology has grown so much at the present time that it is impossible to enumerate here even the major works on separate chemical products. Therefore, we will limit ourselves to mentioning here the names of the authors who have created great works on chemical technology: D. P. Konovtsov, L. M. Lyalin, F. P. Fedot'yev, P. M. Luk'yanov, A. Ye. Pary-Koshits, S. S. Sametkin, S. I. Vol'fkovich, and L. P. Fokin. A completely new phenomenon in our literature is the many-volume general course of chemical technology, compiled by a group of authors under the editorship of S. I. Vol'fkovich.

The editions of symposia of the selected works of the major Soviet chemists are a very valuable contribution to our chemical literature. They include A. N. Bakh, V. I. Vernadskiy, N. Ye. Dem'yanov, M. A. Il'inskiy, N. M. Kizhner, N. S. Kurnakov, S. V. Lebedev, D. E. Pryanishnikov, V. Ye. Tishchenko, and A. Ye. Favorizkiy. The same is true of the reprints of the classics of the classics of Russian chemistry, especially those of D. I. Mendeleev. The collection of his works began to appear in 1934, and is to consist of 25 volumes. Volumes VI and VII of the works of M. V. Lomonosov, containing his works in physics and chemistry, have also been published in the Soviet period.

Soviet periodical chemical literature has grown no less than educational and monograph literature. Instead of a single chemical journal which existed in pre-revolutionary Russia, nine leading journals on chemistry are now published: Biochemistry, Journal of Analytical Chemistry, Journal of Colloidal Chemistry, Journal of General Chemistry, Journal of Applied Chemistry, Journal of Physical Chemistry, Journal of the Chemical Industry, News of the Department of Chemical Sciences of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, and Advances in Chemistry. In addition there are numerous journals on the separate branches of the chemical industry, as well as the "Proceedings" and "News" of scientific research and educational chemical institutes.

The invasion of the German-Fascist usurpers inflicted considerable damage on Soviet chemical literature. Many books, already submitted for publication before the beginning of the war, either have been published only recently, or are still to be published. Some journals, including such indispensable ones as Chemical Reference Journal and Chemistry in the School, were discontinued during the war years, and have not been published again to this date. Existing journals continue to appear in smaller size and with great delay; the quality of the paper and of the typographical work is frequently not up to standard. All these defects, which can be explained to a considerable extent by the difficulties of the postwar period, are temporary and will soon be overcome. Soviet chemists,

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inspired by the appeal of our great leader, I. V. Stalin, "not only to equal but also to surpass in the near future the achievements of foreign science," are applying all their knowledge and strength to achieve this noble aim. Soviet chemistry has entered a new period. There is no doubt whatsoever that Soviet chemical literature will reflect this in a worthy manner, and will surpass the chemical literature of foreign countries both in quality and in quantity. The guarantee of this is the incessant preoccupation of the Party and the Government with the development of science, the glorious traditions of Soviet chemical literature, and the patriotism of Soviet chemists and their devotion to the great work of Lenin and Stalin.

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